than borders adjoining Pakistan with a view to checking the entry of the anti-social elements and the flow of arms and ammunition; and

(b) by when the entire border is likely to be fenced?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI M. M. JACOB): (a) In Punjab 356 Kms and in Rajasthan 58 Kms of fencing has been erected. Work is in progress on the construction of another 144 Kms of fencing in Rajasthan.

(b) There is no proposal to fence the entire border.

Communal riots in Varanasi

569. SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA:
DR. Z. A. AHMAD:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Communal riots took place in Varanasi recently resulting in several deaths and injuries;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) what steps Government propose to take to control the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI M. M. JACOB): (a) to (c) The Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs has made a detailed statement on these riots in the Rajya Sabha on November 22, 1991, as per enclosed statement.

Statement

Situation rising out of recent communal violence at Varanasi (U.P.)

According to the information received from the State Government, the communal trouble at Varanasi started in the evening of 8 November, 1991 during a traditional religious procession for immersion of Kali idols. Clashes between the two communities broke out following an accidental injury to a person of another community from the fire crackers let off during the procession. Anti-social elements took advantage of the resentment generated by this incident to start looting and arson. Rumourmongering by these elements led to incidents of brick-batting and stabbing between the two communities. Some persons coming out of a cinema hall also fell prey to this violence. These clashes resulted in the death of eight persons; four died on the spot and four succumbed to their injuries later in the hospital. Nine persons were injured. Some shops suffered minor damage due to arson. Senior officers reached the spot on receiving information of the disturbances and brought the sitaution under control. Curfew was imposed in the areas of eight police stations as a precautionary measure.

The curfew was gradually relaxed from 11 November, 1991. However, violence erupted again on 13 November, 1991 when some people attacked the passengers of a tempo in Madanpura locality with knives and scissors; one woman was killed and 4 persons were injured. In Mohalla Janganbadi, a crowd belonging to one community collected and started shouting provocative slogans. In Mohalla Sunarpura and Revdi Talab, four incidents of stabbing took place. A bomb was also thrown at ADM (City) and SP (City) due to which one Orderly was hurt. During these fresh incidents, 7 persons were killed and 11 injured. Thereafter the process of arrests and searches was intensified.

According to the State Government the curfew was tightened and the police also undertook house to house searches to unearth illicit arms, ammunition and explosives. The police have so far arrested 617 persons of which 302 belong to one community and 315 to the other community.

In all, 17 persons lost their lives and 26 persons received injuries during this period. Of the persons killed, one person who was in police custody died in a hospital; the DM Varanasi had ordered a magisterial inquiry into this death.

Police pickets have been set up in Varanasi city and intensive patrolling continues. At present, there are 13 companies of P.A.C. and 6 companies of CRPF deployed in the city. No untoward incident has been reported since 18 November, 1991. The State authorities have informed that ex-gratia grant @ Rs. 20,000|- each to the next of the kin of the persons killed in communal violence, Rs. 4,000|- each to those seriously injured, and Rs. 1,000|- each to those who received minor injuries is being paid.

All necessary help and assistance has been provided by the Central Government to the State. Five additional companies of CRPF were provided to the State on 15 November, 1991. The State Government have reported that the situation is under control and the curfew has been gradually relaxed. Curfew Passes have been given in deserving cases, including to all MPs and MLAs.

The Central Government is resolved to maintain communal peace and harmony in the country. Law & Order is a State subject; howere, the Centre has from time to time issued guidelines to the States for the promotion of communal harmony. It also shares its intelligence with the States and provides Central forces when necessary. In recent weeks, it has been alerting the States about the possibility of communal violence in different places. To improve the communal climate a meeting of the National Integration Council was convened on the 2nd November, 1991 to discuss the issue of Communal Harmony in the context of the Ram Janam Bhumi-Babri Masjid issue. The NIC called upon all concerned to act with restraint and in a manner that will promote harmony and goodwill among all communities.

I have conveyed to the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh the anxiety expressed by the members over the situation in Varanasi and the manner in which it was permitted to develop. I drew his attention to the points which particularly agitated the members and requested him to furnish full information on these points. I also suggested to the Chief Minister to seriously consider the suggestion of holding a Judicial Inquiry into the incidents. I am pleased to report to the House that the Chief Minister informed me today that the State Government has ordered a Judicial Inquiry in respect to the communal incidents at Varanasi.

VHF Wireless Stations

570. SHRI MURLIDHAR CHANDRAKANT BHANDARE:
SHRI BEKAL UTSAHI:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that militants in Kashmir and Punjab have set up VHF wireless stations with Pak assistance; and

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard and Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI M. M. JACOB): (a) and (b) The availability of communication equipment with the terrorists was revealed with the seizure of arms and ammunition and equipment from the terrorists in the Valley. The Government has taken steps for location and tackling such transmissions.